

MID-SEASON ODDS AND ENDS



By Lorin Anderson, President

July 4th has come and gone. The year – and the summer season – are tipping past the halfway mark. That makes this a suitable moment for reviewing news items and notes that have landed on the desk of late and caught my attention.

Rounds played in the U.S. for the first one-third of the year (through April) are up **4.0 percent**. A couple of thoughts on this, the numbers are *extremely* dependent on weather and you see huge swings when weather is particularly better or worse than normal. Now, it is important to note that golf *instruction* has become less and less dependent on the weather. We've seen a huge growth in indoor teaching bays and off-course indoor teaching centers over the past decade. In a recent survey of 75 Proponent members across the nation we found that **only two** were not able to teach year-round due to not having an indoor facility or being in a 12-month climate. This means the old days of Northern teachers looking to move South for the winters may be coming to a close as most of our members can now teach in a single location year round no matter where they are located...

The rounds played numbers also remind me that many industry people feel our “grow the game” initiatives are failing to generate big enough numbers. My response from studying many of the programs is this: Because the industry is so fragmented (the largest course operator controls **less than 2 percent** of facilities in the U.S.) we need to focus on “grow the

game” success stories at the local level. Even after eight years of Get Golf Ready, the vast majority – some **60 to 70 percent** of golf courses, still don't use the program or anything similar. Even so, **465,000 people** have gone through GGR since it started in 2009.

Instead I like to look at how individual academies and facilities are making these programs work for their businesses. We have many Proponent members reporting that they run **more than 200 newbies** through Get Golf Ready or similar programs each year, with a significant percentage coming back to play the course, buy equipment and sign up for more instruction. The question to me isn't “Do grow the game programs work?” The real question is why on earth are there still so many course operators that aren't even trying them?...

In 2015, GolfTEC set records for number of locations, total lessons given, total clients and total sales...

Since 2010 the LPGA T&CP has grown from 1,200 members to **1,700 members** in **23 countries**...

Last year the average course saw **87 rounds** per day open. That's approximately **50 percent** utilization of available tee time inventory. That is up from **84 rounds** per day open in 2010-12 according to PGA Performance Trak and the NGCOA...

The 18 hole round is dying for many golfers. Last year 9-hole rounds on EZLinks were up **29 percent** versus 2014. GolfNow saw a **33 percent** increase.

Enjoy the long days of summer, while they last.... **PG**

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